

House Resolution 1264

By: Representatives Richardson of the 19th, Sheldon of the 105th, Manning of the 32nd, Pruett of the 144th, Smith of the 129th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and commending Mr. Wilbur Rakestraw, former NASCAR driver; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Mr. Wilbur Rakestraw was born on June 6, 1928, in Dallas, Georgia where he
4 still lives today; and

5 WHEREAS, Mr. Rakestraw began his racing career in 1956, driving a 1937 Ford Coupe, car
6 number 999, at his hometown track, the Dallas Speed Bowl, which was sanctioned by the
7 Southeastern Racing Enterprises (SRE); and

8 WHEREAS, he also raced at many other SRE tracks including Fairburn, Gainesville,
9 Lakewood, Cornelia, Canton, Macon, Eastman, and the Peach Bowl in Atlanta; and

10 WHEREAS, on March 31, 1957, in a race at Lakewood Speedway, he gained fame for
11 driving his car through the fence and into 18 feet of water in an infield lake to avoid
12 T-boning a fellow driver who had wrecked in front of him; and

13 WHEREAS, although a limited schedule prevented him from scoring well in points, he still
14 finished with six top-ten finishes out of 30 starts, 20 percent, in the NASCAR Grand
15 National Division driving the Joe Jones Number 99 Ford; and

16 WHEREAS, in 1958 and 1959 he competed in the NASCAR Convertible Series gaining
17 three top-five and six top-ten finishes out of 11 starts (55 percent); and

18 WHEREAS, he raced at 19 different NASCAR tracks including both the last beach race and
19 the first speedway race at Daytona's International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Florida; the
20 first races at Charlotte, North Carolina and Atlanta, Georgia; and others at Darlington,
21 Martinsville, North Wilkesboro, and Richmond speedways; and

1 WHEREAS, Mr. Rakestraw was a member of the Midwest Association for Race Cars
2 (MARC) where he accomplished many wins and top-ten finishes; and

3 WHEREAS, in a race at a steep banked asphalt track in Dayton, Ohio, his hands blistered
4 while driving, leaving his raw flesh on the steering wheel, but he completed the race in sixth
5 position, and was quoted as saying, "It was a tough drive...I think we sorta surprised the
6 Northern bunch though...If my hands hadn't gotten so bad there at the end, I think I'd have
7 finished even higher."; and

8 WHEREAS, unlike many of today's drivers, his success was hampered by a lack of financial
9 backing, but his shortage of sponsorships was overcome by blood, guts, and talent; and

10 WHEREAS, on this the 50th anniversary of the Daytona 500, it is only proper and fitting that
11 we recognize Mr. Rakestraw and his career as a NASCAR driver from 1956 until 1961.

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
13 the members of this body recognize Mr. Wilbur Rakestraw for his outstanding
14 accomplishments in the field of racing and commend him on this the 50th anniversary of the
15 Daytona 500.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is hereby
17 authorized and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Mr. Wilbur
18 Rakestraw.